The Advisers BULLETIN

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THE FACTS IN THE CASE

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JOURNALISM AND THE CURRICULUM....A comprehensive study originally presented at the CSPAA annual meeting March 21 during the 24th annual CSPA convention at Columbia University, New York City.

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By Marion C. Sheridan

AT THE present time the curriculum of the secondary school is pretty much under fire. So are questions of the preparation of teachers and of fair demands upon teachers. It may be that there is still time for those who are interested to direct the form that the curriculum, teacher preparation, and teaching working conditions will take in the future.

Plans for secondary school curricula have been drafted. Two in particular have focused attention: EDUCATION FOR ALL AMERICAN YOUTH and the so called Harvard plan, GENERAL EDUCATION IN A FREE SOCIETY. Neither is particularly concerned about journalism; specific references to it are few and far between. The Harvard report in discussing writing calls for stress on points that journalism inevitably stresses: constant practice; careful criticism and revision; writing close to students' interests; "coherence, closeness of observation, integrity of purpose, freshness of attack;" minimum essentials; and grammar when it serves a purpose.[1]

In a journalism class papers are very likely to be corrected quickly and returned. There is little question of the students' desire to write and of their interests. Motivation is not artificial.

I HESITATE to say it, but in some general studies of secondary education the significance of journalism is less than advisers are disposed to attribute to it. Joseph Carter, assistant professor of journalism at Temple University, wrote in THE CLEARING HOUSE in October that the curriculum and the competently published newspaper complement each other, comprising a unified whole. He believed that the student newspaper might easily be the most valuable medium of the public relations program of the school.[2]

The school newspaper, however, was not treated impressively in the PUBLIC RELATIONS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS, the February, 1948, Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals. In many of the reports journalism is not the most important instrument for the public relations of the school;

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IN THIS ISSUE

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it is one of them. It is grouped with means of mass communication and with any activity that brings the school before the public.

Those in administrative posts are rather cautious about commitments on the subject of the place of journalism -- and justly so -- for the term means many different things: intensive courses, extensive courses; sound courses, superficial courses. It means so many different things for so many different reasons: financial arrangements, physical arrangements -- including printing facilities and commercial departments -- and human factors.

The reply of one state administrator recently was, "I do believe that journalism should be a part of the curriculum. However, it may be handled in one of three ways. It could be a one year's course or a part of another course in English or handled as an extra-curricular activity. I think the school situation determines how it should be handled. In a very large school there might be enough students interested to carry on a full credit course."

MANY CONCERNED with the admission of students to college do feel that journalism is a satisfactory substitute for an English course.

Texts and articles on journalism indicate that it is a school subject, that it is in the curriculum -- with or without credit. Because those responsible for publications are the contributors to magazines devoted to journalism, the specialized literature would lead a reader to believe that it has a definite place; that Journalism I, II, and III are taught. For example, they are included in the Los Angeles course of study: Journalism I, for those getting initiated; Journalism II, for those working on the paper and putting it out; and Journalism III, for the leaders of the paper.

Whether or not the course is so definitely organized, journalism is generally conceded to be almost indispensable for what it does for the students on the board, for what it does in welding the student body together, and for what it does in interpreting the school to students and to the community.

GRANTED THAT a school has a newspaper or magazine, whose province is it? For the moment I should like to refer specifically to a school newspaper, where there is an acute problem because of the weekly or biweekly demands on the adviser.

Ordinarily, as revealed by incidental comments or common assumptions, the school paper is a phase of English work. Phases of English are sometimes in question. Recently in one high school, for example, courses in "Business English" came under the Commercial Department rather than the English Department; the plan was criticized by evaluators. At English meetings I have heard it said that there is no reason why English teachers should always have to assume the "burden" of publications; on the other hand, one press association does not wish its members confused with English teachers or its work regarded as English.

Mr. Homer Post of Tacoma, Washington, bravely leaped into the argument when he wrote that courses in journalism are courses in advanced English composition, a form of creative writing. He added, "Don't quarrel with the English Department about the department in which it belongs."[3]

PAPERS ARE curricular, extra-curricular, and co-curricular. There are many schemes, ranging from schools where work on the school paper is entirely extra-curricular -- with no credit in points and with no recognition by time allotment in the school program -- to such a school as one noted in the article by J. Kenner Agnew, where six journalism classes were conducted daily.[4] In Boys' High School in Brooklyn the staff may or may not be recruited from the journalism class.[5] Mrs. Dorothy Stephans, Covington, Kentucky, reported a journalism class without a paper, though there was a paper in the school. Jane Barber of Mt. Pleasant, Utah, conducting a paper as an extra-curricular activity, found it possible to have passing students absent from any class to work on the paper if they were needed.

Our school paper was turned over to the English Department in November, 1919, almost thirty years ago. The paper is older than the Columbia Scholastic Press Association, which will celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary next year. Naturally there had to be school papers before students and advisers could be organized into

a nationwide group. At present the first period on Friday is recognized as the time that the editorial board meets and that for the board the meeting takes precedence over any other appointment.

IN CONNECTICUT the custom is to have journalism an extra-curricular activity. As president of the Connecticut Scholastic Press Association in planning for the convention at the University of Connecticut last fall I had included on the registration blank a question as to whether journalism was an extra-curricular subject, a fifth subject, or the replacement of another subject. In but one of the schools replying was it part of the curriculum; another adviser said it was a part, but his replies indicated that he had apparently misunderstood the question.

In a school that I recently visited an English teacher had four periods of English and two assigned for the newspaper. In that school at one time journalism was a school subject, most unsuccessfully. The school was glad to have it extra-curricular again. The four-page paper appears eight times a year. All typing for the paper is done by the Commercial Department.

What the task of publication is varies greatly. Its proportions advisers may themselves sometimes determine. We publish a five-column, four-page weekly on an extra-curricular basis -- and without having students dismissed from any class for the paper. From time to time we have six page issues, and less often, an eight-page issue. There is no Commercial Department in the school, and there has been no instruction in typing. All typing -- and all manuscripts have been typed -- has been done by students, volunteers from the staff.

WE ARE not trying to make a record when we have three papers in preparation at one time, nor have we tried to perform miracles. We feel that future prices for abnormal performances are too high to have us ambitious to break records. We do wish to be public-spirited, professional, and sane.

We realize that there is increasing attention to working conditions for teachers. WORKING CONDITIONS OF TEACHERS, reported by Eleanor Bly at the Cincinnati N.E.A. Convention, suggested "the integration of extra-curriculum activities into the curriculum ones in order to give every teacher his fair share of responsibilities in his specific field of work."[8] In a BILL OF RIGHTS FOR TEACHERS, attributed to Addison J. Allen, Pennsylvania, it was indicated that many teachers throughout the nation "are doing less effective work than they are capable of doing because of" -- for one thing -- "excessive demands upon their time for the direction of extra-curriculum activities."[8]

IN PUBLIC RELATIONS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS, Hazel Koppenhoefer wrote:

> *Too often the school publication in the high school is just another extra-curricular activity, tolerated as an outlet for superior students who are not kept busy enough by classwork.*

The BULLETIN...*and* YOU

THE BULLETIN is published four times a year in the interests of the more than 950 members of the *Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association*. It aims to perform for the advisers a service similar to that which the SCHOOL PRESS REVIEW provides for the students. The editor's chief concern, therefore, is HOW CAN THE ADVISERS ASSOCIATION *through The Bulletin* SERVE *You* PERSONALLY? A questionnaire is enclosed with this edition for YOUR answer to this question. Subsequent editions will be planned in so far as possible according to the specifications YOU provide on the questionnaire.

Although this edition of *The Bulletin* was prepared in May, unavoidable circumstances delayed its appearance in time to reach most advisers before the closing of the 1947-48 school term. The editor hopes it is in your hands on the opening day of school for 1948-49, that you find it of interest, and that you offer criticisms, suggestions, and contributions freely and promptly. Other editions are scheduled to appear October 15, January 15, and March 15.

With the October number will be enclosed the first of a series of REVIEWS OF FORTHCOMING BOOKS by Col. Hans Christian Adamson, author and book reviewer of note. These reviews are contributed by Colonel Adamson to the CSPAA and are offered by the Advisers Association as an aid to advisers in guiding the reading of students in the field of contemporary writing. An announcement accompanying this *Bulletin* includes additional information concerning the project.

Supervision of the paper is a chore assumed by faculty members, without consideration of their qualifications for it, in addition to regular or slightly lightened teaching loads. Although, properly handled, the work involves many hours of after-school time, extra compensation is rarely offered.

For twenty years, my staffs and I have had to work until ten o'clock at night each week on press day to put the paper to bed.

That extra-curricular activities as conducted in most American high schools today are detrimental to students and teachers was stated in a controversial article by William Meyer, SATURDAY EXTRA-CURRICULAR SCHOOL WITH PAY FOR THE TEACHERS! Mr. Meyer, a member of the faculty of the New York State College for Teachers at Albany, urged that talented teachers be obtained from various places, with pay, just for Saturday mornings. He led to this conclusion by writing:

Thus many American boys and girls have been transformed into "basement angels," spending days and weeks and months in school without seeing -- let alone being exposed to -- one hour of health-giving sunshine.

Administrators, having forgotten the hard work involved in teaching five or six classes daily, do not realize that they are seriously undermining the physical and mental well-being of their staff by expecting overtime work for understandard pay. The anemic neurotic condition of so many "willing" teachers cries to high heaven for drastic action. Because extra-curricular activities have great value, they should not be discontinued, but improved. This best can be done, without sacrificing health to learning, by creating the SATURDAY MORNING EXTRACURRICULAR SCHOOL.[10]

SUCH A solution is of course at variance with including journalism as a fifth subject, a kind of fifth estate. THE REDIRECTION, REORGANIZATION, AND RETOOLING OF SECONDARY EDUCATION[12] suggested that four subjects is an arbitrary unit. Under proper guidance students could carry much more. Journalism has attracted brilliant students, and it is generally admitted that good students are best adapted to journalism.

A few years ago someone in our school thought it very democratic to urge that students of low ability doing work in machine shop practice and the like should not earn but be given places on the school paper. Work with newspapers and with students of little ability in academic subjects have been very unhappy on the editorial board. Unable to keep up in school work and to submit copy, they have felt a sense of frustration. This has been true even when the students have been really loved for themselves and -- perhaps for the family journalistic tradition -- brothers and sisters who have been outstanding on the paper.

ALLOCATION OF journalism by some curriculum makers as an elective in the senior year does not take into account the way that journalism really works. In THE ENGLISH JOURNAL, Hazel Pullman told of the necessity for long range planning if it is a senior elective. Added requirements for graduation -- laboratory science and American history -- have crowded out other electives.[11] Most satisfactory experiences have been those of students who start in the sophomore year and continue through the better part of senior year with increasing responsibilities. Preparation for the literary magazine or the annual usually begins with the junior year.

Journalism at its best has much to offer that is in accord with present ideas of education. Though it is seldom if ever recommended for everybody, it does provide for individual differences. Everyone may need a study of the newspaper, consumer education; not everyone needs to publish a newspaper, producer education. Though journalism may serve as a vocational course, justification for the subject is broader than a vocational end. Thoroughness, definiteness, accuracy, and initiative are basic demands.

MOST OF our journalists are articulate not only in writing. They can talk well in English classes, address journalism meetings, win a speaking contest, report news over the public address system when the newspaper cannot be issued. They read critically, as I have been forced to notice when, working at my desk, I have heard students raise discerning points as they read copy. They have a broad outlook, realizing the significance of school, local, and world happenings and problems. Activities in journalism represent the qualifications of future teachers.

SCHOLASTIC for March 1 gave the yardstick proposed for teachers by the New

York State Committee. Classroom skill is only one measure. Exceptional teachers may be especially good as advisers for school activities; may be creative; may arrange student trips, using community resources, and relate subject matter to contemporary life.

THE OUTCOMES from journalism fit well into the plan for the English course outlined by the Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English. The plans emphasize the aims of education, the characteristics of learners at a given age, and the conditions under which learning takes place. Motivation is important. The Committee on Student Publications of the National Council of Teachers of English aims to help English teachers and to work with other agencies serving jounalistic activities in secondary schools.

It is profitable for advisers to consider the place of journalism in relation to the curriculum and to try to work out with others fair ways of providing for journalism in the secondary school. The problem is a broad one, quite likely to cause journalistic "victims" or enthusiasts to lose an objective point of view. The important thing of course is what is best for the students in the future as well as in the present.

We can rejoice that we have organizations that give us a chance at meetings and in publications to deliberate major issues. Though we repeatedly hear that we live in an age of confusion, with such resources advisers need not suffer from confusion in regard to journalism.

1. *General Education in a Free Society*. Report of the Harvard Committee. With an Introduction by James Bryant Conant. Cambridge, Massachusetts; Harvard University Press, 1945. Page 112.
2. Carter, Joseph C. "Tapping All News Sources," *The Clearing House*, October, 1947. Pages 85-86.
3. Post, Homer A. "Accrediting Journalism as an English Elective," *Quill and Scroll*, December-January, 1947-1948.
4. Agnew, J. Kenner. (High School, Santa Monica, California) "How Many J-Courses Needed to Make a Superior Paper?" *Quill and Scroll*, April-May, 1947. Page 14.
5. Hoft, Harriet. "The Red and Black is an Instrument of Democracy," *School Press Review*, May, 1947. Page 12.
6. Stephans, Dorothy. (Holmes High School, Covington, Kentucky) "Teaching a J-Course without a School Paper," *Quill and Scroll*, December-January, 1947-48.
7. Barber, Jane. (Wasatch Academy) *The NAJD Digest*, January, 1948.
8. *Teachers' Journal*, New Haven, Connecticut, February, 1948. Pages 10-11.
9. The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, February, 1948. Pages 126-127. "The Junior Fourth Estate."
10. *The Clearing House*, January, 1948. Pages 294-295.
11. Pullman, Hazel. (Teacher of Latin and English, sponsor of the *High School Times*, Garnett (Kansas) High School) *The English Journal*, April, 1946. Page 196.
12. State Department of Education, Connecticut, Pages 5-6.

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Dr. Marion C. Sheridan, who is head of the Department of English at New Haven High School, New Haven, Connecticut, is also a vice president of the National Council of Teachers of English and president of the Connecticut Scholastic Press Association.

IT'S A SIGNIFICANT YEAR

for CSPAA activities

NOW

New and revised PUBLICATION AIDS off the press include

What Price Advisership?
School Newspaper Fundamentals
Revised CSPA Stylebook

OCTOBER

14th YEARBOOK CONFERENCE
Friday and Saturday, October 8-9, featuring *short course* in Yearbook Production, annual luncheon at Hotel McAlpin, October 9, announcement of contest ratings.

Advisers' Bulletin #2, October 15.

MARCH

25th ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION
March 10, 11, 12.

CHALLENGE FOR A RECORD 25TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

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A STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES...by the new President of the Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers' Association, who is also publications adviser at Allegany High School, Mt. Savage, Maryland.

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THE ADVISERS of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association accorded me a great honor in electing me their president. I am most grateful for their confidence, and I accept the challenge of the office with sincere humility. It is my honest hope that together we will not only maintain the high standards of this Association but by coordinating our efforts in a harmonious and effective manner will achieve new goals in service to our students, our schools, our communities, our country, and our world.

Entering upon an important milestone in the history of the CSPA, *its twenty-fifth anniversary year*, we find the world in a state of chaos and anxiety more acute than during the war years. The significant world-shaping events of these post-war years require more critical thinking, more alert challenging, and more Christian reasoning than prior crises demanded of us--both as individuals and as teachers.

There is no more effective means of promulgating the seeds of Christian charity and tolerance than through the press of America. Neither is there a greater potentiality for ensuring future peace and understanding among nations than through the inculcation in our student editors of sound ideals and high moral standards. To shoulder our responsibility with the ultimate of success, we must be well-informed citizens ourselves.

THE ADVISER'S BULLETIN, as the official mouthpiece of the CSPA Advisers' Association, should prove somewhat helpful in this respect. Through its pages advisers should be kept informed of changing trends and current problems. It should perform the two-fold function of presenting the viewpoint of the Association and of serving as a medium of expression for the advisers--a kind of clearing house for our problems and our ideas.

However, it will serve its purpose only if the advisers--cognizant of these aims--will let the Editor know what their ideas are, what problems are facing them; if they will feel free to offer their criticisms, suggestions, and contributions. I bespeak for the new Editor your cooperation.

IT IS MY hope that 1948-49 will be a milestone in the history of the CSPA and the Advisers' Association, not in years alone but in achievements. With your help, this will be possible.

MARY E. MURRAY

The Advisers
BULLETIN

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.....NEWS BRIEFS.....

AT THE THIRD National Conference on Citizenship called by the Attorney General in Washington, D.C., May 14-18, the Association was represented by Miss Mary E. Murray, CSPAA president, Dr. Joseph M. Murphy, CSPA Director, and Dr. Regis Boyle, adviser of The Easterner, Washington, D.C.

....WHEN THE DEPARTMENT of State of the USA issued recently a magazine, AMERIKA, featuring articles and illustrations on the American Way of Life for distribution in the USSR, it was with the aid of the Director, advisers, and files of the CSPA that much of the material dealing with the YOUTH OF AMERICA was compiled. The magazine is all in Russian!

Only copy!!

SUPPLEMENT TO THE ADVISERS BULLETIN, Volume V, Number 1

THE COLUMBIA SCHOLASTIC PRESS ADVISERS ASSOCIATION
320-24 Fayerweather Hall, Columbia University
New York 27, New York

ANNOUNCING A NEW FEATURE

Accompanying the next issue of The Advisers Bulletin late in October will be a new feature, REVIEWS OF FORTHCOMING BOOKS, by Colonel Hans Christian Adamson, author and book reviewer of note. These reviews are contributed by Colonel Adamson to the CSPAA and are offered by the Association as an aid to advisers in guiding the reading of students in the field of contemporary writing. They were arranged for with the cooperation of Dr. Joseph M. Murphy, director of the CSPA.

COLONEL HANS CHRISTIAN ADAMSON.

Colonel Hans Christian Adamson served as Chief of Personnel Narratives in the Office of Chief of Air Staff, USAAF, during World War II. He was born in Denmark on July 20, 1890. On completing his formal education in Denmark and England, he came to America where he worked on newspapers in various parts of the country, serving in capacities from reporter to managing editor. He also went to Europe as foreign correspondent and saw service in World War I. In 1930 he married Helen A.Lyon of Boston.

Colonel Adamson left the newspaper field in 1926 to become Special Assistant to Brig. Gen. F. Trubee Davison during the latter's term as Assistant Secretary of War for Aviation. He held that position until 1933 when he resigned to become Assistant to the President of the American Museum of Natural History. Colonel Adamson returned to Army Service in the Summer of 1941 and was retired for physical disabilities incurred in the line of duty (combat) on December 15, 1945. As Chief of the USAAF Personnel Narratives Office, he directed the collection and writing of the human interest history of the Army Air Forces in all theatres of War. Among outstanding authors who took part in this project were John Steinbeck, Walter D. Edmonds, Henry F. Pringle, Philip Wylie, Lucien Hubbard, Jack Kirkland, Clayton Knight, Dr. William Carlson and Bogart Rogers.

WITH CAPTAIN RICKENBACKER'S MISSION

In the Summer of 1942, Colonel Adamson was temporarily assigned by the Secretary of War to accompany Captain Edward V. Rickenbacker on a mission covering all Army Air Forces combat fronts. On October 21st, the Army bomber, in which they were en route from Hawaii to Guadalcanal, had a forced landing in mid-ocean. As the plane crashed into the sea, Colonel Adamson received an injury to his back that paralyzed him almost completely. After 24 days of drifting on the ocean in three rafts, the seven men who survived the ordeal were found and rescued by Navy fliers.

On Colonel Adamson's release from Walter Reed Hospital in the Spring of 1943, he was temporarily assigned by Gen. H. H. Arnold to the office of Dr. John Studebaker United States Commissioner of Education. His assignment was to make a Nation-wide tour on behalf of the High School Victory Corps, to aid in the effort to keep High School students from quitting their classes to enter employment to make money. On the completion of this mission in the Fall of 1943, Colonel Adamson returned to his permanent duties as Chief of Personnel Narratives, USAAF.

On August 18, 1945, after extensive but intermittent hospitalization at Walter Reed and other Army Hospitals, Colonel Adamson was found physically disqualified for further military duty and sent into retirement.

EXTENSIVE LITERARY ACHIEVEMENTS

Although Colonel Adamson left the newspaper field more than twenty years ago, he engaged, over the years, in extensive writing and educational activities. He was the author of a popular history volume of the Americas: "Lands of New World Neighbors"; two books on African exploration and native life entitled, "The Empire of the Snakes", and "Out of Africa", in collaboration with Frederick Carnochan; also "Exploring Today", in collaboration with Lincoln Ellsworth and "Knights of the Air", in collaboration with Lt. Lester Maitland. Other literary activities on his part include conducting and writing a monthly book-review column, "Books For Men", as well as free-lance book reviews for the Saturday Review of Literature, The New York Times and the New York Herald Tribune book review sections and other publications. In addition, Colonel Adamson has written numerous articles for periodicals dealing with aviation, exploration, New World history and popular science.

As a writer of radio dramas for production on all major networks in the United States and in Central America, South America and Canada, his radio network plays include such well-known series as "New Horizons", "Man and the World", and "Exploring Space". Other radio series by Adamson include "The World's Most Honored Flights", and the "National Air Travel Club". In recognition of the high literary and dramatic standards of his radio plays, he was given the Harper Radio Award two successive seasons for writing one of the ten best radio dramas as well as three Honor Awards by the Institute for Education By Radio, the Commonwealth Award, and that of the Women's National Radio Council.

He was the author of "Eddie Rickenbacker", an authorized biography published in the Fall of 1945 by Macmillan Company. He contributed toward the writing of the basic treatment of the 20th-Century-Fox motion picture biography of Eddie Rickenbacker entitled, "Captain Eddie".

Colonel Adamson is a member of the American Writers' Association; Aviation Writers; The Wings Club; The Dutch Treat Club; The Banshees; The Silurians; The Saints and Sinners; The Adventurer's Club; The Advertising Club of New York, and Member-at-Large of the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

His military decorations include: The Legion of Merit with Cluster and the Conspicuous Service Cross with Cluster.

Supplement to the
Advisers Bulletin

GUIDE TO GOOD BOOKS

by

HANS CHRISTIAN ADAMSON

The object of this column is to bring within the range of Advisers to and Editors of the Scholastic Press a summary of current books--books not written specifically for boys and girls of high school age but, which, for one reason or another, would be the kind teachers and parents might encourage young people to read. All books in this column are recent and available in most book stores. While the following reviews are excerpts from Col. Adamson's "Books For Men" in "True--The Man's Magazine," all have universal appeal.

CRUSADE IN EUROPE by General Dwight D. Eisenhower is not the autobiography of the commander of the greatest forces of land, air and sea ever assembled in one unit. Instead, it embraces, in its magnificent and deeply human sweep, the down-to-earth story of millions of men and thousands of women who took part in the greatest military triumph in European history. Team work--from top to bottom and in every branch of the military services--were victory speeding factors. He points out, time and again, that solidarity of thinking and action by land, sea and air led to victory, and underscores that it was the cooperation of aerial, naval and ground war specialists that formed a superior and hard hitting team. (Doubleday-$5.00)

Although subtitled "Stories of Florida Fishing," CRUNCH AND DES, the twentieth book by Philip Wylie, is more than a mere collection of gulf-stream fishing tales. The adventures of Crunch and Des, owners of a Miami charter fishing cruiser, which began in The Big Get Away, Salt Water Daffy and Fish and Tin Fish, are continued here in eight lively short stories and Key Jinx, a novelette with more amphibian adventure per square inch than a porcupine has quills. (Rinehart-$2.75)

Gordon C. Aymar rates a loud and listy Well Done! for the imagination and independence he exercised in assembling material for A TREASURY OF SEA STORIES. To be sure Moby Dick, Bligh of the Bounty, Captain Cook, Columbus and Lord Nelson are on deck, but so are such wonderful Johnny-Come-Latelys as James Michener, Thomas Heggen, William McFee and C.S. Forester. There's the tang of the sea on every page. Illustrations by Rockwell Kent. (A.S. Barnes-$5.00)

What would you do if you were Henry Colby, a shipwrecked sailor on a tiny Pacific island with several sinister shipmates who wanted to kill you? You'll find the spellbinding answer in THE LEDGER OF LYING DOG by William G. Weekley. The step by step, day by day escape of Henry Colby and the slow turning of the hunted to the hunter is graphic, gripping and gory. (Doubleday-$3.00)

Jack Hines, who writes so well about men and dogs on Alaskan gold trails half a century ago, reaches a new high in WOLF DOGS OF THE NORTH. A top-notch book for any man with a corner in his heart for a dog. Illustrated by Roger Vernam. (Greenberg-$2.75)

The first twenty-eight centuries of THREE THOUSAND YEARS OF ESPIONAGE by Kurt Singer are archaically top-heavy. But his cloak-and-dagger boys and girls gain speed when we reach the crafty and ruthless "undercover agents" who served Napoleon, Kaiser William, the last Czar, Hitler and Red Russia. A superior blend of authentic history with "who-dun-it" suspense. (Prentice-Hall-$3.00)

Feature of Aaron Sussman's AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER'S HANDBOOK, supervised by Bruce Downes, is a large chapter on color-photography. This good guide to good pictures describes the latest cameras, photo accessories and picture-taking methods. (Crowell-$3.75)

THE PLAGUE AND I by Betty MacDonald is full of so much solid reading, hearty comedy and heartfelt pathos that it rises to the top of the current crop like cream in a bottle of milk. Like thousands of other servicemen who spent much time in hospitals, I find her barbed and/or gentle humor about medicos, surgeons, nurses, patients and visitors particularly delightful. Considering the fact that it is about life in a tuberculosis sanatorium, with the author as a patient, it is a remarkable product of a staunch spirit, a keen mind and an alert sense of humor. (Lippincott-$2.75)

You meet some grand sportsmen, wonderful trail dogs and read about many truly exciting adventures in HUNTING AMERICAN LIONS by Frank C. Hibben. In this saga about a rapidly vanishing American--the Big Cat--the author describes his experiences with ace professional cougar hunters during his assignment, for the Southwestern Conservation League, to survey the mountain lion population in Arizona and New Mexico. To the uninitiated, hunting cougars in the desert country may sound like tame stuff. But wait until you're read about the man, horse and dog killing grind that goes into cornering beasts like the cougar. (Crowell-$3.75)

John Kieran's 1949 INFORMATION PLEASE ALMANAC is even more decisive, colorful, readable than the 1948 edition. The regular departments of the book have been revised, improved and brought up-to-date. Special articles by top-notch writers review the old year in sports, politics, the arts and world events. The "Political Guide," which featured the 1948 edition, is replaced by a section entitled "How Man Lives Under Capitalism, Socialism and Communism." To make this survey, questionaires covering vital statistics, wages, literacy, living standards, education, old age security, recreation, transportation and so on were sent to some twenty countries. (Farrar,Straus-$2.50)

In THE WAYS OF FISHES, Dr. Leonard P. Schultz (aided by Edith M. Stern) unfolds an interesting tale about the habits and habitats of the finny tribes. Whether your interest in fish is as deep as the sea or as small as a goldfish bowl, you will find that Dr. Schultz knows fish. (Van Nostrand-$4.00)

Old rules for bird hiking, as well as a lot of new methods for sighting our feathered friends, are presented and explained by Dr. Leon A. Hausman in BIRD HIKING. He has the knack of making this fine hobby more than just watching birds in that he expands it into a tour of observation that includes the sights and sounds of the general country-side. Sound advice on equipment, apparel and keeping hike records. (Rutgers University-$2.00)

Edited by Gene Schoor, the GIANT BOOK OF SPORTS contains instructions for playing baseball, football, basketball, boxing, bowling and tennis, based on techniques employed by noted stars of these sports. It gives the history of each game, records, achievements and rules. About 500 action drawings by Samuel Nisenson provide ample show-how to a text full of know-how. (Garden-City-$2.50)

WILD ANIMALS OF THE WORLD by William Bridges and beautifully illustrated by Mary Baker, is not a reference volume for occasional use, but a highly readable book about animal life in a peaceful world remote from the paths of Atomic-Man. (Garden City-$4.95)